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2020

College of Health Professions Newsletter Spring-Summer 2020

College of Health Professions

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College of Health Professions

Newsletter Spring-Summer 2020

- **Dean's Welcome**
- **Alumni, Student and Faculty Contributions during Covid-19**
- **CMD Faculty Share Experience**
- **Faculty Highlights**
- **Student Highlights**
- **CHP Awards**
- **Virtual Commencement Events**
- **Contact Us**

Dean of the College of Health Professions



A Message from Dean Daly Iversen

Dear Colleagues, Alumni and Students,

This year has presented us with extraordinary challenges. We have faced and are still battling a pandemic that has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people worldwide and will forever change our way of life. As a society we are also coming together to address the longstanding issue of discrimination and racism.

Since my arrival at SHU this January, I have been impressed with the strength, courage, sacrifice, creativity, and resilience of our CHP community. Our students' creativity and passion have led to new inventions and novel ways of helping others. Our alumni have risked their health and safety to care for those affected with COVID-19 and have joined together to support one another during the pandemic. Our faculty have implemented novel ways of educating our students to ensure they can progress in their curricula and move onto becoming the future of our health professions.

We also worked diligently with our senior leadership and state officials and were the first of the health professions colleges in the state to open our doors this summer to students to enable them to complete their clinical competencies and return to the workforce.

I hope you will enjoy learning about some of our many CHP community accomplishments and our new course offerings for summer and fall.

Dean Daly Iversen



1 - PA students



2 - PA faculty and students



3 - Tandet Center, 4 Hospital Plaza, Stamford, CT 06902



4 - Anatomage Table





5 - Professor Sandy Narciso-Owen, PA Program



6 - PT/OT/PA students back in classes for June/July opening of the Center for Healthcare Education.



7 - PT/OT/PA students back in classes for June/July opening of the Center for Healthcare Education.



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15 - PT/OT/PA students back in classes for June/July opening of the Center for Healthcare Education.



16 - PT/OT/PA students back in classes for June/July opening of the Center for Healthcare Education.



17 - Occupational Therapy Splinting Lab



18 - Occupational Therapy Splinting Lab



19 - Occupational Therapy Students



CHP RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Alumni Contributions during Covid-19

Alumnus, Ellis Badger, OTR/L - Graduating Class of 2019 Remembering COVID-19

Ellis, a recent graduate of the Occupational Therapy Program, is employed as an Occupational Therapist for Wellpath Recovery Solutions at Bridgewater State Hospital. Bridgewater State is a maximum security, forensics hospital originally run by the Department of Corrections. The Persons Served (PS) at Bridgewater State Hospital have been court ordered to receive an evaluation to determine if they are competent to stand trial.

Ellis works on multiple units in the hospital, including the COVID unit. In this unit, everyone is required to wear an N95 mask and full PPE. A typical day consists of 1:1 engagement with each PS to provide word searches, brain teasers, and poems. Group activities such as bingo and music are conducted from hallways while the PS stay in their rooms. Ellis reports it is tough for the PS to remain in their rooms for long periods and he needs to continually dig deep to provide activities to keep everyone engaged while maintaining social distancing.



20 - Ellis Badger, OTR/L

Alumna, Samantha Balestrieri an acute rehabilitation physical therapist at NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, the rehabilitation unit was decanted to accommodate acutely ill patients with COVID-19. Rehab therapists transitioned to acute care therapists. Samantha works with ICU patients who are intubated and vented to help position patients to improve lung perfusion. She was particularly touched by a patient, Ms. X. The mortality rate for anyone on a ventilator with COVID-19 was 85%, so Ms. X's chances of survival were slim. However, day by day, she became less dependent on the ventilator and moved to a step-down unit, where she received physical therapy services. When Samantha walked into her room, Ms. X was wide awake, eyes open, and smiling! Since she was trached - Ms. X could not speak but communicated with Samantha using a white board. Her PT started by sitting on the edge of her bed then progressed to cardiovascular endurance, strength, and ambulation, a small first step in her journey to recovery. After 2 1/2 weeks, she was removed from the trach, speaking and walking 15 minutes on the treadmill. She was discharged on day 62. All members of her care team joined her and her family as she left the hospital. It was a humbling and joyous experience. "These miracles and pieces of light keep us all going."



21 - Samantha Balestrieri, DPT



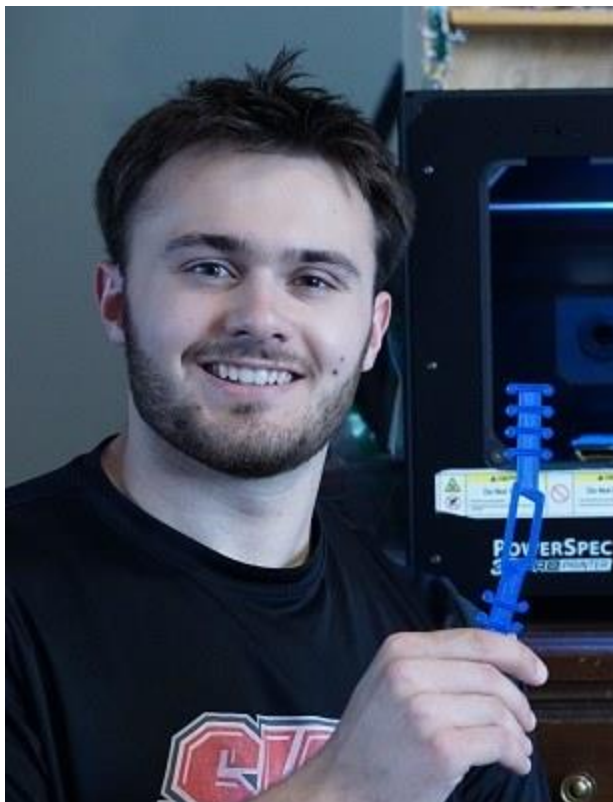
Student Contributions during Covid-19



22 - Kylie Roberts, SPT (student-Physical Therapy) and her Grandmother

Kylie Roberts, SPT, created the "Quarantine Routine" featured in ChoosePT on their series regarding stories about the positive impacts that students can make during COVID. Kylie together with Kyle loos, SPT, coordinated the SHU PT fundraiser.

<http://www.apta.org/blog.aspx?blogid=10737421427&navID=10737423712&fbclid=IwAR2rKje5F3ZklvPv0UoLyskSEkPZ967yRz6hNxUmnOdFmhp8pkuDCm85vJU>



23 - Roy Colter, SPT (Student- Physical Therapy)

Roy Colter, SPT, using his experience with 3D printing and recognizing the discomfort health care workers experience with long-term wear of masks, created ear guards for PPE. The ear guards prevent discomfort behind the ears by allowing health care workers to have an alternate place to position their masks on their heads. This is a great example of a student hobby contributing in the communal effort against COVID-19.



24 - Exercise Science -Junior Steven Lucero

Steven Lucero, Exercise Science -Junior Steven Lucero builds a foundation for his future through involvement at SHU <https://www.sacredheart.edu/news-room/news-listing/faith-service-academics-at-shu-affect-students-life/>



25 - Kylie Lauterbach is currently serving as COVID-19 contact tracer in Connecticut.

Three Masters of Public Health students: Olivia Hine, Debrina Hudson, and Kylie Lauterbach are currently serving as COVID-19 contact tracers in Connecticut. They are working in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Kylie Lauterbach is contact tracing as part of her Applied Practice Experience with the Stratford Health Department. She writes, "to be a part of contact tracing, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, has been a very rewarding process. I am happy to be helping patients through the difficult times of coping with COVID, while also keeping communities safe by identifying those who may not have known they came into contact with an infected person."



Health Science student, Carissa Scheier, interned at the Jewish Senior Services Center, an elderly care facility in Bridgeport, CT. During the Covid-19 quarantine, Carissa reached out to other students to make homemade cards for the residents, with positive quotes, positive images, drawings, stickers. Julia Tavorilla, a student entering the public health program assisted with the project.



26 - Occupational Therapy Splinting Skills Lab

Carin Macnamara, Creative Director of Advanced Imaging, Wilmington, MA, donated face shields to the Occupational Therapy Program. Students cannot practice splinting skills 6 feet apart, the face shields allow for students to practice and faculty to teach effectively and safely this summer.

Faculty Contributions to Covid-19





27 - Dr. Christopher Petrosino

On behalf of the college, Dr. Christopher Petrosino, Chair of the Physical Therapy and Human Movement Science Department delivered donations of PPE (gloves and N95 masks) to the central drop off location for the Yale System (Greenwich, Bridgeport, Milford, Lawrence & Memorial, and Yale hospitals).



28 - Professors, Melissa Chaplik and Sarah Pryor

Professors, Melissa Chaplik, MMS, PA-C and Sarah Pryor, MMS, PA-C, working per diem as hospitalist physician assistants at Yale New Haven Hospital during the COVID19 crisis. Melissa and Sarah took care of inpatients to help colleagues that work on the front lines.



Dean Daly Iversen provides expertise on COVID-19 topics in interviews with the Hartford Courant (Social distancing may be helping Connecticut's fight against COVID-19, but the surge is still coming)

<https://www.courant.com/coronavirus/hc-news-coronavirus-lamont-curve-flattening-20200409-johbisrjczb57kcyntk6p5hs3e-story.html>

the April issue of the American Republican and US News and World Report

<https://www.rep-am.com/news/news-connecticut/2020/04/09/saint-marys-hospital-parent-company-10-covid-19-patients-removed-from-ventilators-in-the-past-week/>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2020-04-21/new-covid-19-tracking-app-may-find-hotspots-across-america>

Master of Public Health faculty, Drs. Vernarelli and Pendley were very engaged in educating the public about COVID-19 through their collaboration with state officials and prepared routine updates on the COVID-19 pandemic via a newsletter. Both were routinely interviewed by media regarding the pandemic.

Jacqueline Vernarelli, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Health Science and Leadership was quoted in the Greenwich Time Insider "CT Doc Who Tracked Ebola: " You need an Army" for Coronavirus contact tracing. <https://www.ctinsider.com/news/coronavirus/thehour/article/CT-doc-who-tracked-Ebola-You-need-an-army-15259816.php> and in the CT Post regarding obesity as a result of COVID.

[Survey: CT Kids have gained 5.5 pounds during coronavirus quarantine – CT Post](#)

Dr. Sofia Pendley, Assistant Clinical Professor and Patricia Carl-Stannard were quoted in an article in the New Haven Register: [Experts: 'Quarantine fatigue' could cause spike in coronavirus cases](#)



29 - Dr. Jackie Vernarelli and Dr. Sofia Pendley

Dr. Jody Bortone EdD, OT/L Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, College of Health Professions, offers thanks to essential workers. "A heartfelt thanks to all healthcare and essential workers" during our Alum Concert Series

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZtDPahPZ7I>



30 - Timmy Maia

Christina Gunther, MA, Director, Global Health Programs & Health Science Program and Bronwyn Cross-Denny held a free webinar on "Covid-19 exposes Inequities in Health Care: What can we do as Advocates for Social Justice"

[Covid-19 Exposes Inequities in Health Care: What can we do as Advocates for Social Justice? – Westport Patch](#)

CMD Faculty Share Expertise



Faculty in Sacred Heart University's [speech-language pathology program](#) participated in a recent Facebook Live discussion hosted by SHU's Alumni Association and moderated by [Ciara Leydon](#), interim

chair of the department of communication disorders. [Jamie Marotto](#), clinical assistant professor, and [Jill Douglass](#), assistant professor, were panelists. The faculty explained why people who stutter or have a hearing loss might struggle now more than they did before the pandemic, and provided suggestions on how family members, friends and co-workers can be supportive.

“As a society, we need to increase our empathy toward people with communication disorders,” said Marotto, “We need to increase our compassion and understand the complexity of their needs.”

Rhea Paul, Ph.D, CCC-SLP, Chair, Professor of Speech Language Pathology and Elizabeth Simmons, Adjunct Instructor, conducted the Facebook Live Alumni Conversation “How to talk so your kids will listen—and learn—at home: Language stimulation for young children.”

<https://www.facebook.com/SHUALUMNI/videos/299743707706077/>



31 - Dr. Jamie Marotto and Dr. Ciara Leydon



32 - Dr. Jill Douglass

Stuttering

Individuals who stutter are now forced to use new technology as they work from home, said Jill Douglass, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P, Assistant Professor, Communication Disorders, whose research focuses on stuttering’s cognitive and emotional impact on individuals and their families. Participating in group video conferences places stutterers in a new and different situation. “This creates a change in their

communication,” Douglass said. “It changes their ability to read a crowd ... it changes their timing. It’s a complete overhaul on how they communicate. They’re used to predictable ways to communicate, but now there’s no predictability with the new technological platforms.”

For people who stutter, Douglass said listeners should let them finish their statements. “We need to have a higher level of patience and tolerate the silence,” she said. The silence someone might hear on the other end of the conversation is the person with the stutter trying to speak. “They know what they want to say; they just need the time to say it,” she said.

Hearing Aid fitting Despite a Pandemic: The SHU Audiology Clinic is providing counseling and remote hearing aid programming via telehealth. This summer, SLP graduate students will be working with Dr. Jamie Marotto, Au.D., CCC-A - Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Disorders to provide these services and continue remote patient-centered care.

An estimated 46 million Americans have some degree of hearing loss. The disorder can make people feel isolated, decrease their productivity and lead to a poorer quality of life, said Marotto. Hearing aids help, she added, but they’re not perfect in every listening situation.

Social distancing and the need to wear masks to combat the spread of COVID-19 can impair people who have trouble hearing. They can no longer read lips, and standing six feet away from others makes conversations harder to hear, Marotto said.

There are ways to help hard-of-hearing individuals overcome these struggles, such as speaking more clearly by talking a little slower and louder, though Marotto clarified that people should not slow down speech too much, or shout directly into a person’s ear, because that can actually make speech more difficult to understand. People also should remove themselves from noisy situations and avoid looking another way while talking. Also, if possible, people should try to get (or make) masks with a clear, see-through window so lips and facial cues can still be read.

Faculty Highlights



Christopher Petrosino, PT, Ph.D., Chair of Physical Therapy and Human Movement Science and Peter Ronai, MS, RCEP, ACSM, CEP, EP, CSCS, FACSM, Clinical Professor, held a Conversation on Facebook LIVE on May 8, 2020 entitled "Home Office Ergonomics: How to be Fit when you Sit."

Paul Possenti, PA, an adjunct Professor in the Physician Assistant Studies Program and Director of Trauma Services and Emergency Management at Bridgeport Hospital leads the "Hospital Incident Command," to ensure adequate supplies of PPEs, ventilators, and negative -pressure rooms need patient needs. CT Magazine (connect link versus state CT magazine)
https://www.connecticutmag.com/article_261b6b4c-9c65-11ea-9e73-df7114aad0a0.html#possenti

Wendy Bjerke, Ph.D, Clinical Professor, Exercise Science - In her role as a faculty fellow for the Center for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching (CEIT), Dr. Bjerke assisted faculty university wide during the transition to online learning and helped develop a summer teaching seminar for SHU faculty. She is also serving as an instructor for CEIT during the summer seminar.

Stephanie Clines, Ph.D, LAT, ATC Clinical Assistant Professor, recently became a certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) provides participants with knowledge and skills to recognize and respond to crisis and non-crisis situations by providing initial care and support to an individual experiencing a mental health or substance use problem. A core mission of MHFA is also to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health through education with the aspiration that MHFA training will become as common as CPR and basic First Aid across communities throughout the U.S.

Sarah Pryor, MMS, PA-C, Instructor, Physician Assistant Studies was selected for the PA Foundation Nutrition Outreach Fellowship.

Congratulations to Dr. Jill Douglass, Communications Disorders and Dr. Michelle Wormley, Physical Therapy for receiving tenure.



33 - Dr. Stephanie Clines, Dr. Wendy Bjerke, Professor Sarah Pryor, Dr. Michelle Wormley

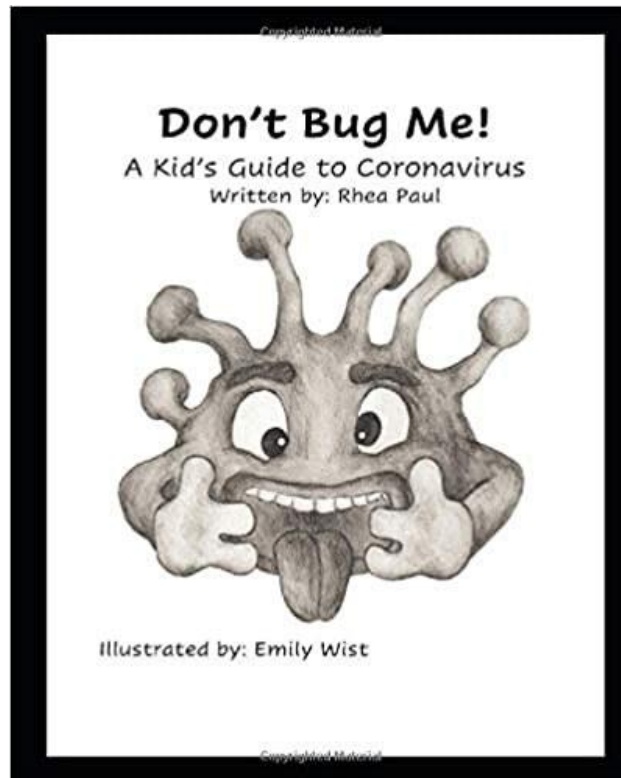
Dr. Rhea Paul published a children's book called "Don't Bug Me: A Kids' Guide to Corona Virus." All proceeds are donated to the World Health Organization Global Covid 19 Fund.

It is available as a paperback from:

https://www.amazon.com/Dont-Bug-Me-about-Coronavirus/dp/B088JNVKT4/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=don%27t+bug+me+rhea+paul&qid=1589498818&s=books&sr=1-1

Or as a narrated PowerPoint on the SHU website Covid page (under "Health and Wellness)."

<https://www.sacredheart.edu/offices--departments-directory/health-services/coronavirus/>



Dr. Sharon McClosky has assumed the position of chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy. Dr. McCloskey earned her occupational therapy degree from Trinity College Dublin, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of New Haven and a Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership (EdD) from the University of Hartford. Sharon is specialty certified with pediatric and mental health practice expertise. She served as the interim chair of the department during AY 2019-20. Please join us in welcoming Sharon to her new role.



34 - Dr. Sharon McCloskey

Drs. Joanne Bortone and Gail Samdperil assumed new Associate Dean roles within the College of Health Professions. Dr. Bortone assumed the role of Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and New Initiatives. Jody is the former Chair of Occupational Therapy program and served as Interim Dean of the CHP during the recent dean search. Dr. Bortone earned her EdD from Fordham University, a master and bachelor of occupational therapy from New York University and Columbia University, respectively, and an associate degree in liberal arts from Centenary College.

Dr. Gail Samdperil has assumed the role of Associate Dean of Students Affairs (undergraduate and graduate). Dr. Samdperil is also the Program Director for the Master in Athletic Training. Dr. Samdperil earned her EdD from Fordham University, her master's in athletic training from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a bachelor of science from Boston University.



35 - Gail Samdperil, Ed.D., Jody Bortone, Ed.D.



36 - Governor Ned Lamont, Mayor Joseph Ganim and President of Sacred Heart University Dr. John Petillo

The University is exploring the addition of a doctorate in chiropractic studies and graduate program in nutrition

[College of Health Professions](#)

<https://www.sacredheart.edu/news-room/news-listing/sacred-heart-and-university-of-bridgeport/>

Student Highlights

PA students win positions on the student academy of AAPA (national organization) there are now (3) students total from both cohorts with elected positions who represent the PA program on the national level, which is incredible and not common given the number of PA programs in the U.S. Erica Ramos and Eryka Bradley join Ashton Ogle on this organization.

1. Erica Ramos – Northeast Regional Director for the Student Academy of AAPA (SAAAPA)
2. Eryka Bradley – Director of Diversity and Outreach for the Student Academy of AAPA (SAAAPA)

<https://www.aapa.org/governance/general-elections/student-academy-board-of-directors-election/>

Ashton Ogle (CO 2020) was elected as the Northeast Regional Director in 2019.

Stamford Hospital 2020 Research Day Winners:

Top of the case presentations category was the report by Ashton Ogle and Michael Greenstein (CO'20), *Klebsiella Pyomyositis: A Rare Form of a Rare Disease*.

Rabail Altaf and Irasema Gonzalez (CO 2020) were selected as the winners in the inaugural PA Program/Systematic Review category for their project, *L-Methylfolate or Folic Acid as adjunct therapy to SSRI/SNRI for Major Depressive Disorder: Systematic Review & Meta-analysis*.

CHP Awards



37 - Laura D. Rivera, M.S., CCC-SLP, Bridgeport Public School District, Department of Speech-Language Pathology



38 - Chrystyne Maloney, Athletic Training, Exercise Science



39 - Ciara Leydon, Ph.D, CCC-SLP, Associate Professor, Communication Disorders



40 - Monica Cortes-Speech Language Pathology



41 - Leo Katsetos, MEd, LAT, ATC, Sacred Heart University



42 - Matthew Wingert, Academic Advisor, Health Science and Leadership



43 - Aviniash Mishra, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Assistant Professor, Communication Disorders



44 - Gianna Rodrigues, Health Science and Leadership



45 - Sheila Watts, PT, DPT, MBA, GCCS, Director of Geriatric PT, Jewish Senior Svcs



46 - Mordechai Sacks, MS, PA-C, Larchmont Family Medicine



47 - Sharon McCloskey, MBA, OTR/L, DipCOT, Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy

Community Partner Award - Laura D. Rivera, M.S., CCC-SLP, Bridgeport Public School District,
Department of Speech-Language Pathology

Excellence in Teaching Award - Aviniash Mishra, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Assistant Professor, Communication
Disorders

Undergraduate Student Leadership Award - Gianna Rodrigues, Health Science and Leadership

Graduate Student Leadership Award - Monica Cortes, Speech Language Pathology

Outstanding Staff Award - Chrystyne Maloney, Athletic Training/Exercise Science Program

Staff Innovator Award - Matthew Wingert, Academic Advisor, Health Science and Leadership

Dean's Appreciation Award - Sharon McCloskey, MBA, OTR/L, DipCOT, Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy

Dean's Appreciation Award - Ciara Leydon, Ph.D, CCC-SLP, Associate Professor, Communication Disorders

Outstanding Clinical Preceptor Award - Mordechai Sacks, MS, PA-C, Larchmont Family Medicine

Outstanding Clinical Preceptor Award - Sheila Watts, PT, DPT, MBA, GCCS, Director of Geriatric PT, Jewish Senior Svcs

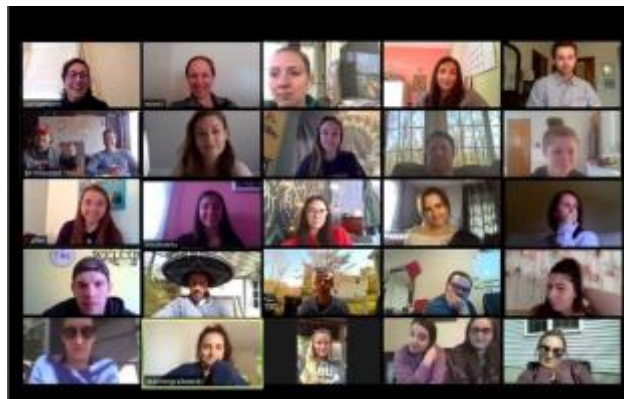
Outstanding Clinical Preceptor Award - Leo Katsetos, MEd, LAT, ATC, Sacred Heart University

Virtual Events

The virtual College of Health Professions Alumni Forum was held on June 14th. Scheduled for 60 minutes, it ran for 90 minutes due to the enthusiastic participation of CHP alumni. Dr. Donna Bowers (PT) served as the main facilitator with Dr. Maura Iversen, Dean of the CHP, and faculty from the Physician Assistant Studies, Speech/Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy programs. Fifteen CHP Alumni working in a wide variety of healthcare and educational settings talked about the challenges and triumphs they are facing as essential workers responding to COVID 19. Alums spoke emotionally about the challenges of wearing PPE all the time, not being able to touch clients, concern about returning home to families after working with so many persons with COVID 19, and seeing so many of their patients die or struggle with the aftermath of the disease and ventilation. School-based therapists were challenged by trying to address student's IEP goals via telehealth given the huge disparities in access to technology, Internet, and family support. Universally, alumni felt their SHU education prepared them extremely well clinically as well as for leadership roles demanded by the situation. SHU's CHP programs prepared alumni to be flexible, open, and caring practitioners able to connect with patients and families. Alumni credited the CHP's emphasis on Interprofessional Education, as being extremely valuable for work settings during the pandemic, collaborating with different professions across a variety of health teams. The alumni group expressed gratitude for the forum's providing a space to share and support each other.



The Athletic Training Program held a virtual end of the year party with faculty, students, and preceptors to commemorate the year and celebrate BSAT and MSAT classes of 2020.



On May 8, 2020 the DPT Program held a virtual graduation celebration for the Class of 2020 DPT Graduates. The pinning and awards ceremony recognized all graduates for successfully earning the title of "Doctor of Physical Therapy." Select students were awarded honor designation, excellence awards, and scholarships at the ceremony. Congratulations to our DPT Graduates in 2020!



Professor Christina Gunther and Dr. Kerry Morgan (Health Science) work with Results.org, on meetings with Congress members to request COVID 19 funding, renters tax credit, signing on to the Heroes fund (passed!), and including foreign aid in the next COVID 19 related bill. The professors joined Results Activists for a virtual meeting with Representative Jim Himes on Monday, June 22, 2020.



Communication Disorders held a Virtual Graduation. An “Envelope” delivered to students via OneDrive on May 8, 2020. Contents of envelope included an E-card, Program Director Letter to the Class of 2020, Personalized Wordle, Grad Video, Class photo, Farewell Message from a student representative, Class Gift Presentation by a student representative, and Faculty Videos congratulating students.

Virtual Global Health Abroad Series: Nicaragua and Costa Rica

This 6 week virtual exchange program will examine Nicaragua and migration through the lens of Costa Rica and Costa Ricans. Students will learn about the history and culture from professionals and young people from both Costa Rica and Nicaragua. This will be a true exchange program with the participation

of US university students, Costa Rican and Nicaraguan young people from both rural and urban areas. Through recorded lectures, virtual site visits, live sessions, and group projects students will learn about culture, history, current events, migration, marginalization and social justice issues. A private Facebook facilitates weekly discussion topics and serves as a platform to share ideas, experiences, and cultures. Students from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the US will form small groups to chat daily, share ideas and experiences and collaborate on short group projects.



Contact Us

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College of Health Profession Programs

- Athletic Training
- Communication Disorders (Speech Language Pathology)
- Exercise Science
- Healthcare Informatics
- Health Science
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy

- Physician Assistant
- Public Health



48 - Center for Healthcare Education



49 - The Physician Assistant Program is located at Tandet Center, 4 Hospital Plaza, Stamford, CT. Pictured is Adam Olsen, M.S., PA-C, CCDS, Program Director demonstrating the Anatomage table. The PA program was the first program to use the Anatomage table in their classes.



50 - Team Based Learning Space



51 - Physician Assistant Studies return to campus



52 - Driving Simulator Lab



53 - Occupational Therapy



54 - Physical Therapy

